

## Preamble for 24 Month Limit Suboxone, Subutex and Generics

Opioid addiction is a chronic bio-behavioral disease that often requires opioid agonist therapy to help the patient achieve lasting recovery. Suboxone/Subutex and their generics in conjunction with behavioral therapy is an effective means to achieve that goal.

Fundamentals of Suboxone/Subutex treatment:

1. Become waived to prescribe by taking an eight hour training class. The class is available either online or in person. Once the course is complete, apply with the DEA to obtain an "X" DEA number. The "X" DEA number is needed to prescribe Suboxone/Subutex.
2. Carefully screen potential patients to make the diagnosis of opioid dependence and to identify any other substance abuse disorders.
3. Assess for any psychosocial factors that might prevent a patient from properly using Suboxone/Subutex ( i.e. living with an actively addicted person, ability to safeguard the medication from loss or theft).
4. Assess for any psychiatric or medical disorders.
5. Document a physical examination done by yourself or another physician.
6. Provide informed consent for treatment, providing information about treatment options, including methadone maintenance treatment and medication-free treatment.
7. Screen for recent use of long-acting opioids such as methadone. If positive, do not attempt an office induction unless:
  - a. The dose was 40 mg or lower
  - b. It has been at least 48 hours since last dose
  - c. The patient is in withdrawal at induction
8. Obtain a drug screen prior to induction.
9. Establish and maintain the patient on the lowest effective dose of Suboxone/Subutex.
10. The patient should be in withdrawal prior to induction. Use the assessment instruments available in TIP 40.
11. Periodically and regularly screen all patients for substance abuse problems by performing urine drug screening and film or pill counts.
12. Patients should be asked about their psychosocial functioning, looking for any factors that threaten the stability of their recovery.
13. Refer or provide patients with substance abuse counseling as needed.
14. Review the "Clinical Guidances" for the use of buprenorphine , posted on the Physicians' Clinical Support System – Buprenorphine website at <http://www.pcspb.org/> . You can register for a mentor from the Physician Clinical Support System at this website, as well. Review SAMHSA/CSTAT's "Treatment Improvement Protocols Tip 40, Clinical Guidelines for the Use of Buprenorphine in the Treatment of Opioid Addiction," found on SAMHSA's website at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK64245/>.
15. Obtain a consultation with an addiction medicine specialist as needed.